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ABSTRACT

The Perkins Act mandated the Georgia Council on Vocational Education (GCOVE) as an independent agency strictly responsible for assessment, evaluation, and advisement in the area of vocational and technical education. Planning was always an integral part of the way GCOVE did business. In 1992, agencies larger than GCOVE and with whom GCOVE worked on a routine basis became involved in strategic planning. GCOVE availed itself of the services of the newly created Division of Strategic Planning. By the end of the process, GCOVE had tracked trends in Georgia, the nation, and the world and had looked at the impact that these would have on its mission. Members and staff had come to consensus on a shared view of the future, and they had looked at what types of human resource development (HRD) might be needed to meet that future. With a vision and mission clearly delineated, the participants focused on developing an action plan that included strategic directions, strategic objectives, and strategies. The process benefited GCOVE in a number of ways: defining a core set of beliefs; providing an opportunity to discuss and examine the provisions of the Perkins Act; clarifying to staff what the limitations were in terms of human capital and financial resources; clarifying that no comprehensive coordination of HRD was occurring in Georgia; and identifying new ways in which GCOVE could address Perkins Act mandates. Four strategic directions were identified for 1993-94. (YLB)

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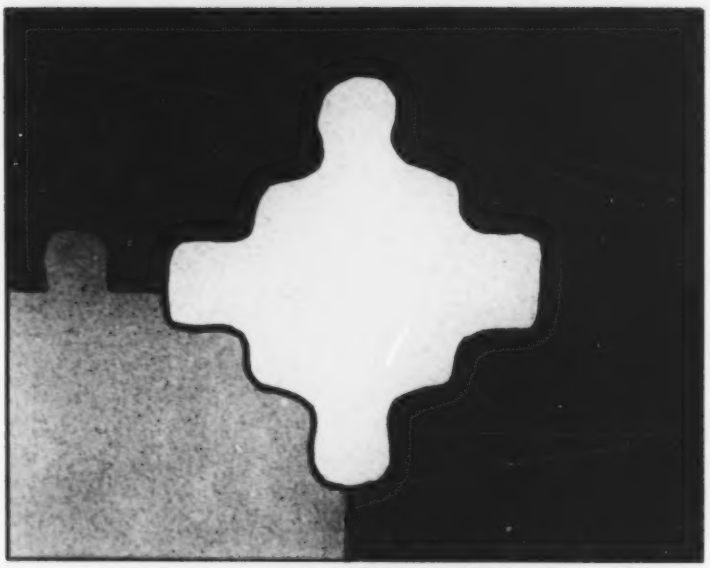
STRATEGIC PLANNING
1992-1994



Georgia Council on Vocational Education

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STRATEGIC PLANNING
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Georgia Council on Vocational Education

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
WHO WE ARE	1
THE NEED FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING	4
STRATEGIC PLANNING	6
GCOVE'S STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS	7
GCOVE'S STRATEGIC PLANNING PRODUCTS	10
THE MISSION STATEMENT	12
GCOVE'S STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND OBJECTIVES FOR 1993-1994	13

Appendix

WHO WE ARE

The Georgia Council on Vocational Education is a part of a historical network of state advisory councils created from the federal government's interest in vocational and technical education. These councils were initially established under the federal Vocational Education Act of 1963, although funding for the councils was not made available until 1968. Legislation guiding the councils' composition and responsibilities has been changed and amended over time, but always with the goal of funding and promoting vocational education. The current governing legislation, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act of 1990, continues past requirements for state advisory councils. Each state currently receiving funds under the Perkins Act has established such a state council, as required by law.

Georgia's council, the Georgia Council on Vocational Education (GCOVE), is an advisory body of thirteen private citizens who are appointed by the Governor for staggered terms. Seven of the members, including the Council Chair, represent the private sector: business, industry, labor and trade organizations, and agriculture. The additional six members represent the entire spectrum of vocational technical education, both secondary and post-secondary levels, and include individuals who have special knowledge with respect to the needs of special populations (including women, the disadvantaged, the handicapped, individuals with limited English proficiency, and minorities). A staff consisting of an Executive Director, an administrative assistant and two professional educational analysts, support the Council's work. GCOVE also uses the services of consultants.

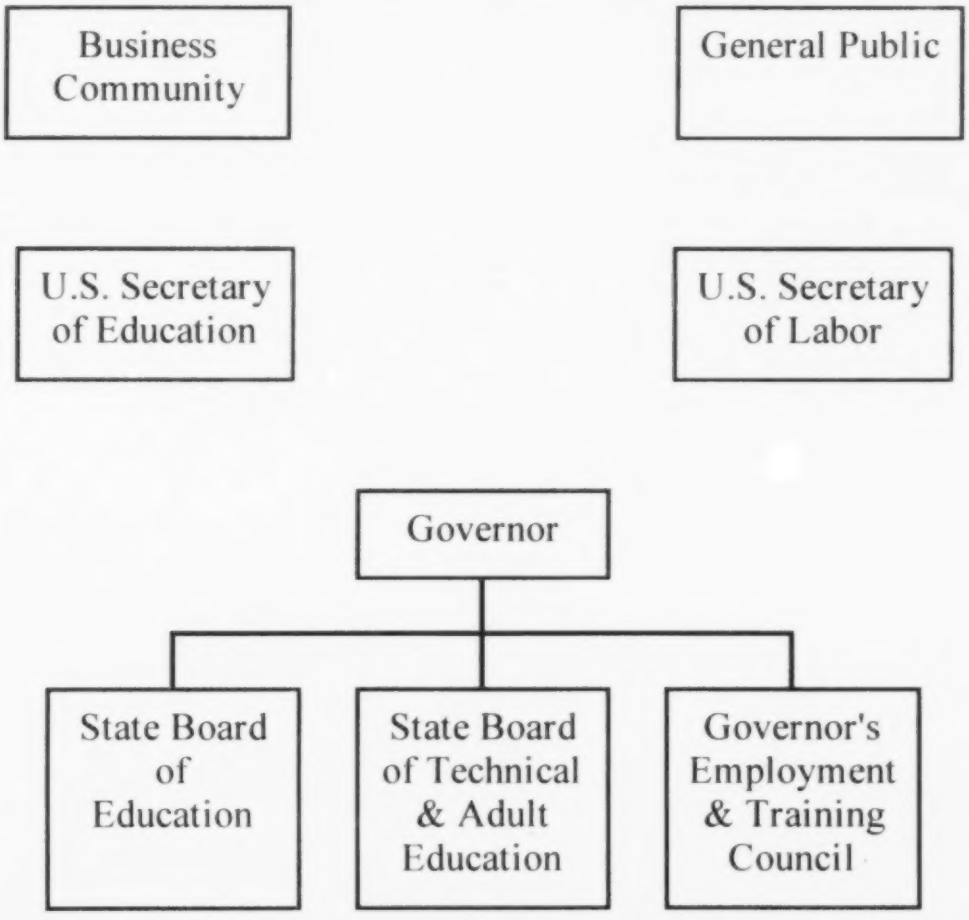
GCOVE operates as an independent state agency and like a number of other small state agencies, is attached to the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) for administrative purposes. Since 1986, GCOVE has authorized the Office of Planning and Budget to act as its legally designated fiscal agent.

GCOVE is mandated by the Perkins Act as an independent agency strictly responsible for assessment, evaluation, and advisement in the area of vocational and technical education. Unlike other vocational and technical agencies in Georgia, GCOVE does not operate educational programs for students at any level.

...GCOVE operates as an independent state agency strictly responsible for assessment, evaluation, and advisement in the area of vocational and technical education

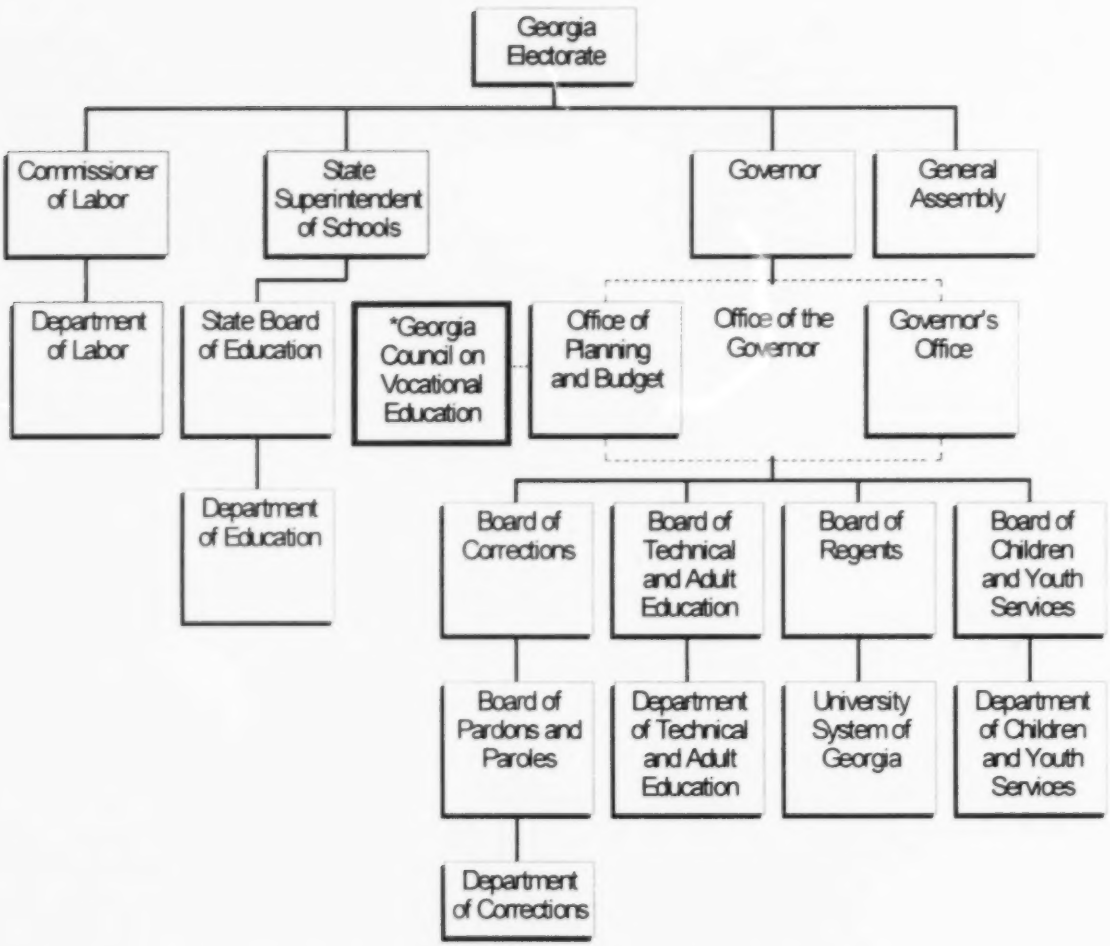
Under the Perkins Act, GCOVE does provide leadership for planning, evaluation, and decision-making within vocational-technical education. GCOVE advises and consults with the business community, the general public and a variety of state agencies including: the Governor's Office, the Georgia Board of Education, the Georgia Board of Technical and Adult Education, the Georgia Board of Regents, the Governor's Employment and Training Council, the Georgia Board of Corrections, and the Georgia Board of Children and Youth Services. The following chart illustrates GCOVE's mandated reporting publics. The organization chart on the next page illustrates GCOVE's position relative to the state agencies and other entities with which it works. GCOVE is also charged with the evaluation of both the vocational education delivery system under the Perkins Act and the job training program delivery system assisted under the Job Training Partnership Act. This is to assure that a consistent, integrated and coordinated approach is followed to meet the economic needs of the State and to provide access to quality programs for all students, including special populations.

GCOVE'S MANDATED REPORTING PUBLICS



GCOVE'S POSITION RELATIVE TO OTHER STATE ENTITIES

(A Working Relationship Mandated By The Perkins Act)



*GCOVE is attached to the Governor's Office for administrative purposes only.

THE NEED FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING

Given the broad range of responsibilities mandated by the Perkins Act and the limited staff available, planning has always been an integral part of the way GCOVE does business. To make the best use of GCOVE's budget, the members' time and the time of staff, GCOVE designs many of its projects to fulfill several Perkins Act mandates at one time. In addition, the Perkins Act funding and reporting cycle covers a two year period, forcing all state councils to build work plans for a longer term than just one fiscal year. Although previous planning processes served to meet the requirements of the Perkins Act in measuring the improvements Georgia has made in developing human resources, these processes did little to develop the human resource potential of the Council itself and to address the changes experienced by GCOVE both internally and externally.

The human resource potential of GCOVE is its greatest strength. The Perkins Act requires broad representation from the worlds of work and education, and places emphasis on including in GCOVE membership individuals who have special knowledge and qualifications with respect to the education and career development needs of special populations. The only attribute that they must have in common is an interest in vocational education.

This broad representation creates a structure that is inherently diverse, but Council members have few opportunities to share the experience that diversity has developed. Members come from all parts of Georgia to meet together every other month. Yet to accomplish the work set out for them by the Perkins Act, GCOVE must act in concert from a shared set of goals or objectives, speaking with a common voice. The process for developing the studies required by the Perkins Act mandates and the members' participation in developing the recommendations that grow from the various projects had created some sense of shared goals, but was not comprehensive enough to provide the members with opportunities to develop a shared vision and a unified voice. Clearly it was apparent that something more was needed.

In 1992 a number of unrelated but important events occurred that would affect GCOVE. GCOVE had just completed a statewide project, in which many stakeholders in vocational education

...this creates a structure inherently diverse but GCOVE must act in concert from a shared set of goals or objectives, speaking with a common voice

played an important role, and on which the entire Council worked, and for which they received considerable recognition. The project exposed members and staff in a very concentrated, focused way to the changes that were taking place in the schools and the work-place. GCOVE had also experienced a change in leadership. It seemed a good time to systematically examine its strengths and weaknesses, scan the environment and take changes into account, and look at new ways for GCOVE to do business.

In addition, agencies larger than GCOVE and with whom GCOVE worked on a routine basis were already becoming involved in a different kind of planning process, called Strategic Planning. However, unlike GCOVE, these agencies directed programs, administered institutions, or provided direct services -- none of which GCOVE does. But, like GCOVE, they also engaged in assessment, analysis and evaluation, and made recommendations on improvements for vocational education. And they, too, had appointed Boards. It appeared that they were using the process to meet needs similar to GCOVE's, only on a larger scale.

...it appeared that [other state agencies] were using the [strategic planning] process to meet needs similar to GCOVE's, only on a larger scale

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Strategic planning is different from long range planning in that it devotes a great deal of time addressing issues external to the organization. The process is used to identify the services or products that a particular organization can deliver well within its operating environment. In doing so, consideration must be given to all stakeholders of the organization; to external opportunities and threats, as well as internal strengths and weaknesses; and to actual or potential competitors. The process is also time consuming and at times, emotionally draining. It requires the active involvement of all key participants during every planning session.

...consideration must be given to all stakeholders of the institution; to external opportunities and threats, as well as internal strengths and weaknesses; and to actual or potential competitors

Strategic planning involves both a process and a product. The process involves guiding members of an organization to envision its future and to develop the general strategies needed to move towards that vision. Desirable by-products of this process when it is well done are team-building, the mutual recognition of the strengths of the individuals involved in the process, and the identification and renewal of a shared sense of purpose among members.

Some products, however, are more concrete. They include:

- a vision of how the organization sees itself and its role in the world around it;
- the directions it will take to make that vision real; and
- a set of objectives that define
  - what exactly is to be accomplished,
  - who is to do it,
  - what the end product should look like, and
  - what resources are needed to make that vision a reality.

These parameters seemed to meet many of the needs of GCOVE--both its members and staff.

GCOVE'S STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Because GCOVE is housed in the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (OPB), it availed itself of the services of the newly created Division of Strategic Planning. Members of this Division met with GCOVE's staff and members and presented them with information about the strategic planning process and its outcomes. It was at this time that GCOVE learned about the level of commitment, in terms of time and personal energy, that would be required to develop a worthwhile Strategic Plan. GCOVE voted to proceed with the planning process.

GCOVE scheduled four sets of two-day long meetings to begin the process. All meetings were facilitated and led by a team from OPB's Strategic Planning Division. The thirteen GCOVE members and Executive Director participated in the process.

In the first set of meetings in November, 1992, GCOVE's members and Executive Director participated in a variety of exercises designed to teach them more about themselves and each other. Some exercises involved working alone, others involved teaming with others. In one exercise, participants were asked to interview the person next to them and introduce them to the group; in another they worked a theoretical problem alone and then with a team. Participants completed a values audit activity, and a personality and leadership inventory. They examined their beliefs as individuals and then discussed their beliefs as a group. They then worked in teams and as a whole to create a set of findings that would reflect those beliefs.

In addition, the participants performed a stakeholder analysis and identified those people or groups who had an interest in GCOVE's work. GCOVE then looked at the types of products or services that they could provide and ways in which they could provide them.

By the end of the second day, GCOVE had developed a draft of its mission statement which was refined in the subsequent meeting. In general terms, GCOVE referred to its work as human resource development.

By the end of the process, GCOVE had tracked trends in Georgia, the nation, and the world and had looked at the impact that these would have on its mission; members and

...by the end of the process GCOVE had tracked trends in Georgia, the nation, and the world and had looked at the impact that these would have on its mission

staff had come to consensus on a shared view of the future; and they had looked at what types of human resource development might be needed to meet that future.

With a vision and mission clearly delineated, the participants focused on developing an action plan. Their plan included:

(1) strategic directions:
- the broad areas of endeavor that need to be addressed

(2) strategic objectives:
- the statements
  - of what is to be achieved over a specific period of time, and
  - by whom; and

(3) strategies:
- what approaches will be used to carry out the strategic objectives.

...members and staff had come to consensus on a shared view of the future; and they looked at what types of human resource development might be needed to meet that future

It was then up to GCOVE staff, with the assistance of the Strategic Planning Division staff, to develop a written document that would form the structure for GCOVE'S activities for the next year. This involved analyzing each strategy; deciding on the actions needed to make the strategy a reality; deciding what the end product should be (a report, a conference, a newsletter); determining the amount of time it would take; determining the personnel and other resources needed; and assigning a lead person to be responsible for assuring that the strategy was implemented. The draft was taken to the Council for their input and additional changes were made. GCOVE then voted to approve the work. The end result, called the operational plan, became the blueprint for GCOVE's activities. This operational plan supplements GCOVE's principal focus of meeting the Perkins Act mandates.

When the process began, there were only two full-time people on staff: the Executive Director and the administrative assistant. Existing staff developed the operational plan in conjunction with other responsibilities which included the day to day operation of the GCOVE office, working toward the fulfillment of the Perkins Act mandates (see listing of GCOVE's

mandated responsibilities in the Appendix), and seizing opportunities as they arose to enhance and strengthen vocational education in the State. Hence, the operational plan was not actually approved until December, 1993.

OPERATIONAL PLAN EXAMPLE

Strategic Direction/Work-Program Name: _____

Strategic Objective I: _____

_____

_____

Strategy: _____

_____

Description of major action steps	Deliverables	Time-line Begin/End		Lead responsbility	Other personnel/ resources needed	Time estimated

Approved/Adopted: _____ **Revisions:** _____

GCOVE'S STRATEGIC PLANNING PRODUCTS

Since GCOVE is a small organization and the strategic planning process is time consuming, the question arises "Was it worth it?" The answer is YES. The Council knew that its plan would be different from a strategic plan created by an agency that directly operates programs. The process, however, did benefit GCOVE. The members and staff defined a core set of beliefs with which they all could agree and upon which they could act.

The process provided an opportunity to discuss and examine in detail the provisions of GCOVE's governing legislation, the Perkins Act. This discussion, coupled with the information that GCOVE had developed on trends in the world, nation, and state, helped GCOVE redefine or enhance several projects already underway.

The process also clarified to staff and to members what their limitations were in terms of human capital and financial resources. This finding, coupled with the enhanced understanding of the requirements of the Perkins Act, has improved GCOVE's ability to set priorities, to choose new projects, and to identify and seize new opportunities.

The process made it clear that at the time there was no *comprehensive* coordination of human resource development taking place in Georgia. This awareness made it possible for GCOVE's Chair to assist in the creation of the Council for Competitive Georgia, a collaborative effort of twelve state level leaders who are committed to developing a single integrated workforce development strategy to assure a world class workforce in Georgia. GCOVE's Chair also served as the Council for Competitive Georgia's first Chair.

The process identified some new ways in which GCOVE could address the Perkins Act mandates, and Council members could be active participants in GCOVE's projects. It certainly provided the members and staff with an opportunity to see the world and each other anew and to tackle with fresh enthusiasm the tasks before them.

GCOVE's mission is to take a pro-active role in assuring Georgia's leadership as an economic power in the 21st century. GCOVE plans to accomplish this task by:

...since GCOVE is a small organization the question arises "Was it worth it?" The answer is YES

- contributing to and supporting the development of a unified human resource development policy for Georgia,
- facilitating articulation efforts between and among the State Boards of Education, Technical and Adult Education, Regents, Corrections, Children and Youth Services, and business/industry, and
- marketing GCOVE's recommendations and projects more broadly and expanding its capacity to convene other entities.

COUNCIL BELIEFS

...foundational belief statements were elicited through a variety of individual and group exercises and distilled into a belief statement

Human Resource Development

Human resource development should focus on self-actualization of the individual. When individuals are provided with this opportunity and become self-actualized, the entire society benefits economically and socially. The result of this process is a people that are more economically competitive within the global economy, provided that the appropriate employment positions and support services have been developed.

The Role of the State in Human Resource Development

The State (government) should play an active role in human resource development by providing leadership, acting as a convener of potential resources, and as the major enabler for human resource development programs.

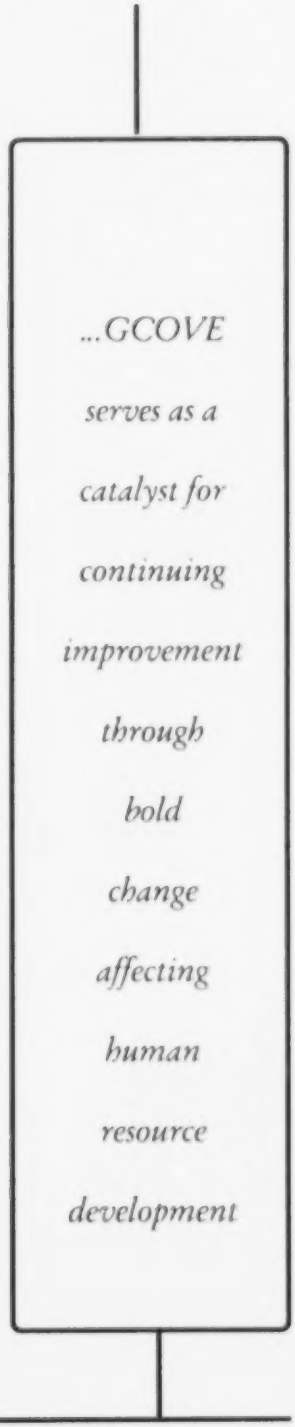
The Role of GCOVE in the State

GCOVE should be a convener, facilitator, and coordinator for the development of human resource development policy and potential resources.

GCOVE should be accessible and visible. It should be the agency that facilitates interagency consensus and collaboration for the public and private sectors. It should identify needs. It should meet at the regional level with a variety of participants in human resource development. It should be the catalyst for change, but it should not be the agency for program implementation.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Georgia Council on Vocational Education serves as a catalyst for continuing improvement through bold change affecting human resource development. GCOVE convenes those involved in human resource development and forges a synergy that results in a prepared workforce capable of responding to the ever-changing economic environment and contributing to the betterment of society. This high quality and well-rounded citizenry assures Georgia's leadership as an economic power in the 21st century as well as enhancing the quality of life for all.



GCOVE'S STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND OBJECTIVES FOR 1993-1994

DIRECTION 1

- Fulfill the mandates of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act of 1990:

OBJECTIVES

- perform gap analysis of Perkins' mandates and strategic directions/operational plan
- design and prepare a report on the strategic plan and other reports which reflect each strategic objective
- determine the status of the commitments made by the State Board of Education, the State Board of Technical and Adult Education, the Board of Regents, and the Governor's Employment and Training Council and documented in the GCOVE publication, *An Agenda for Vocational Education: Shared Goals for the Next Five Years*
- develop separate projects to address any gaps in compliance

(See Appendix for a summary of the mandates.)

DIRECTION 2

- Contribute to and support the development of a unified human resource development policy for Georgia:

OBJECTIVES

- assess the interest of those agencies and councils [with whom GCOVE is required to coordinate under the Carl D. Perkins Act] in developing a human resource development policy for Georgia
- agency heads and council chairs who express an interest will meet with the Governor to share their interest in pursing a human resource development policy for Georgia and to ascertain the Governor's level of interest in such a policy
- identify additional people who should participate in the process to develop a human resource development policy
- participate in and support the process to develop a human resources development policy for the State of Georgia
- provide ongoing support and staffing as needed for developing a process to implement the policy

DIRECTION 3

- Facilitate articulation efforts between and among the Department of Education, the Department of Technical and Adult Education, the Board of Regents, the Department of Corrections, and business/industry:

OBJECTIVES

- develop a resource document describing innovative and exemplary programs, including:
  - the integration of vocational and academic skills;
  - curricula developed collaboratively by secondary and postsecondary educators (such as in 2+2 programs);
  - school completion
  - opportunities developed collaboratively between schools and economic entities (business & industry), such as apprenticeships, co-operative education, shadowing, and other similar programs
- encourage high schools and postsecondary institutions to develop new structures for change by widely disseminating information on innovative programming efforts and activities
- explore ways for students and teachers to have more real world opportunities

DIRECTION 4

- Market GCOVE's recommendations and projects more broadly and expand its capacity to convene other entities:

OBJECTIVES

- act on GCOVE's capacity to meet individually and collectively with key educators, political leaders, community leaders, and private sector economic leaders from across the State to strengthen and enhance vocational-technical education
- promote the recommendations of GCOVE's project *Creating a Vision for Education in the 21st Century*
- encourage the appropriate state agencies, boards, councils and community/business groups to endorse the recommendations contained within GCOVE's *Vision* project
- continue to promote the characteristics of the vocational-technical delivery system and the desired student outcomes which were outlined in *Agenda '95* and validated in *The 1992 Validation Survey: Desired Student Outcomes for Students of Georgia Vocational Technical Programs*
- assist the Department of Education, the Department of Technical and Adult Education, and the Governor's Employment and Training Council in the development of the *State Plan*
- promote GCOVE and its projects and activities

APPENDIX

MANDATE SUMMARY

(1) Advise in the development of State Plan

(2) Make recommendations regarding:
- (a) the State Plan
- (b) policies to strengthen vocational education (with emphasis on the handicapped)
- (c) initiatives and methods the private sector could undertake to assist in modernization of programs

(3) Analyze and report on the distribution of spending for vocational education and on the availability of activities and services

(4) Consult on the establishment of evaluation criteria for vocational education programs

(5) Submit recommendations on programs which emphasize the use of business concerns and labor organizations

(6) Assess the distribution of financial assistance furnished under the Act, particularly between secondary and postsecondary programs

(7) Recommend procedures to enhance the participation of the public

(8) Report on the extent of access to programs of special populations

(9) Analyze and review corrections education programs

(10A) Evaluate at least once every two years:
- (i) extent to which vocational education, employment and training programs represent a consistent, integrated and coordinated approach to meeting economic needs of State,
- (ii) vocational education and JTPA delivery systems are adequate and effective in achieving effectiveness under the two laws,
- (iii) make recommendations on adequacy and effectiveness of coordination between vocational education and JTPA

(10B) Comment on adequacy or inadequacy of action in implementing the State Plan

(10C) Make recommendations on ways to create greater incentives for joint planning and collaboration between vocational education and JTPA

(10D) Report evaluation, findings and recommendations to Governor, State Board, GETC, the U.S. Secretaries of Education and Labor

Funding support for this publication was provided as part of a grant to the Georgia Council on Vocational Education from the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Act.

The Georgia Council on Vocational Education is a private sector led citizens advisory council. Members are appointed by the Governor and represent business, industry, labor, agriculture and education. The primary responsibility of the council is to advise the Governor, the Governor's Employment and Training Council, the State Board of Education, the State Board of Technical and Adult Education, the business community, and the general public of the state on policies and initiatives that should be undertaken to strengthen and modernize vocational-technical education.

The Georgia Council on Vocational Education does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, race, color, religion, national origin or handicap in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies.